

hobby was motorcycles, with a special interest in trick riding.

Sergeant Owens' awards and decorations include two Army Commendation Medals; two Army Achievement Medals; a Valorous Unit Award; a National Defense Service Medal; an Iraq Campaign Medal; and a Global War on Terrorism Service Medal. He is survived by his wife Kaitlyn Owens; his mother Sheila Real of Spiro, OK; his father Keith Owens of Missouri; a stepson Paxton Lee Owens; one sister; and three brothers.

Along with all Arkansans, I am grateful for Sergeant Owens' service and for the service and sacrifice of all of our military servicemembers and their families. More than 11,000 Arkansans on active duty and more than 10,000 Arkansas reservists have served in Iraq or Afghanistan since September 11, 2001.

It is the responsibility of our Nation to provide the tools necessary to care for our country's returning servicemembers and honor the commitment our Nation made when we sent them into harm's way. Our grateful Nation will not forget them when their military service is complete. It is the least we can do for those whom we owe so much.

SERGEANT JONATHAN J. RICHARDSON

Mr. President, today I also honor Sergeant Jonathan J. Richardson, 24, of Bald Knob, who died from combat wounds incurred in Khowst Province, Afghanistan. My heart goes out to the family of Sergeant Richardson, who made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of our Nation.

Sergeant Richardson is survived by his grandparents, Ken and Edna Martin of Mountain Home, AR; his wife Rachel Richardson of Clarksville, TN; his mother Sharon Dunigan of Bridgeport, WV; and his father Jeffery Richardson of Germany.

Along with all Arkansans, I am grateful for Sergeant Richardson's service and for the service and sacrifice of all of our military servicemembers and their families. More than 11,000 Arkansans on active duty and more than 10,000 Arkansas reservists have served in Iraq or Afghanistan since September 11, 2001.

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#### VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, during two votes this morning, I was unavoidably absent and unable to cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: No—The motion to waive the Budget Act with respect to the House message to accompany H.R.

2847, the HIRE Act. No—The motion to concur with the House amendments to H.R. 2847, the HIRE Act.

#### HEALTH CARE

Mr. BURRIS. Mr. President, I rise today to call attention to the important and essential role that health care professionals play in providing quality health care across our Nation. Our Nation's health care system is complex and people with many different health needs are served by the diverse group of caring, qualified professionals in the allied health fields. Some of these important health practitioners include respiratory therapists, music therapists, athletic trainers, clinical laboratory scientists, radiologic technologists, medical assistants and many others. There are more than 100 distinct occupations in the health professions, in addition to physicians and nurses.

These dedicated health professionals are expert in a multitude of therapeutic, diagnostic, and preventive health interventions and wellness initiatives in diverse settings. These professionals work in disease prevention and control, dietary and nutritional services, mental and physical health promotion, rehabilitation and health systems management. They can be found in community, school and athletic training clinics, long-term and rehabilitation facilities, hospitals, laboratories, hospice, and private homes.

These health professionals represent about 60 percent of the health care workforce and approximately 6 million jobs. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 10 of the 20 fastest growing occupations for 2008–2018 are in the health professions.

With many of these fields facing critical workforce shortages, it is essential that we work to increase awareness of the great career opportunities they offer, especially for racial/ethnic minorities. We also need to support the educational programs that will produce our future caregivers. Recent stimulus funding, for example, will go to train 15,000 people nationwide in job skills for careers in health care, IT, and other high-growth fields. In Park Forest, IL, Governors State University will use its \$4.9 million grant to help unemployed, dislocated, and low-wage incumbent workers pursue careers in health care.

I strongly support the vital role health care professionals play in our health care system, which could not function without their tireless efforts. I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing this important group of professionals.

#### TRANSPARENCY AND SUNSHINE WEEK

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, this week we celebrate Sunshine Week, not as a seasonal way to welcome the spring weather but as a time to mark the importance of transparency in our government.

At the U.S. Helsinki Commission we monitor 56 countries, including the United States, to ensure compliance with human rights and other commitments made under the Helsinki Final Act.

A major part of that compliance rests on governments being open and acting transparently—the same focus that is at the heart of the American Society of Newspaper Editors' Sunshine Week.

Practicing open governance is not something countries, States, and cities should do because they have to comply with some international agreement or public records law; rather, being transparent should be an organic part of providing a democratic government and empowering citizens.

When President Obama began his Presidency he called for unprecedented transparency. In his Open Government Directive, he outlined a clear plan for government to become more transparent, participatory, and collaborative.

The logic is clear—only through transparency can people gain the knowledge needed to participate and hold their governments accountable. And only if the people participate can government collaborate with them to glean the best ideas.

This directive was bold and action-oriented, but sadly we have not seen the U.S. bureaucracy react with the same swiftness with which this directive was made. Most agencies, in fact, have not made concrete changes to comply with the directive, according to a government-wide audit released earlier this week by the National Security Archive based at the George Washington University.

It seems for all the White House is doing disclosing its visitors log, broadcasting policy meetings, increasing interactivity through townhall meetings and YouTube interviews—a lot of work remains at the agencies.

Most glaring to me are the delays and in some cases outright denials of Freedom of Information Act requests. I was surprised to learn in the National Security Archive audit that some requests have been pending for 18 years when the law very clearly calls for responses within 20 business days when possible.

Most baffling from the audit may be what files still remain locked in government vaults. For example, today—more than 20 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall—the Pentagon still has not responded to a request for records detailing the military's reaction in 1961 to the building of the wall.

When it comes to diplomacy, this President and Secretary of State Clinton deserve great praise for the work they have done around the world to strengthen dialogue and improve U.S. relationships abroad. This successful record, however, is slightly tarnished by the Department of State's efforts on open governance. The Department more than doubled the number of denials it issued to people filing Freedom of